

Community Involvement – Lavaca Bay CERCLA Process

EPA National Sediments Forum

May 30, 2001

Larry McShea and Ron Weddell,
Alcoa Inc.

Site Overview

- Secondary Bay system in Southeast Texas
- Section of Bay closed in 1988 to taking of fish/shellfish due to mercury levels in fish and shellfish
- Site listed on NPL 1993
- Consent Order signed in 1994 to conduct RI/FS
- ROD expected in 2001

Community Interface Issues

- Potential health effects
- Stigma due to existence of closed area and Superfund designation
- Impact on recreational/commercial fisheries

Community Involvement History

- Community involvement steering committee formed 1994
- Citizen advisory panel formed 1995
- Monthly meeting format, over 50 meetings to date
- Panel still active present day

Citizens Advisory Panel Structure

- Led by independent facilitator
- Ground rules established by steering committee
- Approximately 20 members in size
- Broad cross section of community represented
- Meetings open to general public
- Key stakeholders as resources (Alcoa/Agencies)
- External resources involved as appropriate

CAP Functions

- Vehicle to disseminate project information and upcoming decisions to community
- Opportunity for community to communicate opinions and concerns
- CAP as resource to provide input/contacts on key issues related to project

Why do we believe CAP group has been a success?

- Important community issues have been identified and factored into risk and remedy evaluation process
- Key information relevant to project has been identified through CAP interface
- Significant progress on site via pre-ROD activities with joint Alcoa, EPA and community support

Success factors

- Use of independent facilitator
- Formation of CAP early in process
- Establishment of ground rules for CAP
- Broad representation of community perspectives and backgrounds
- Willingness on all sides to engage in frank and open discussion

Success Factors

- Engagement of outside resources for necessary expertise
- Willingness to listen to and act on input from CAP (ownership)
- Ability to show progress on site clean-up
- Continuity in CAP process and CAP for duration of project